

## **Public Notice – Environmental Project**

### **PURPOSE OF NOTICE:**

The Department of Environmental Quality seeks public comment on the state's response to the environmental aspects of a proposed project in Arlington and Fairfax Counties, Virginia.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

**September 5, 2012 to September 25, 2012**

### **TYPE OF RESPONSE:**

Federal Consistency Determination

DEQ is reviewing the proposed implementation of high-quality, high-capacity transit service along a 5-mile corridor along Columbia Pike in Arlington and Fairfax Counties to determine whether such implementation would be consistent with the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (VCP) established pursuant to the federal Coastal Zone Management Act. The VCP seeks to protect the quality of air, water, and other natural resources in Virginia's coastal area.

### **NAME OF AGENCY PROPOSING THE PROJECT:**

U.S. Department of Transportation: Federal Transit Administration

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

Arlington County and Fairfax County seek federal funding through the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Capital Investment Grant Program to implement high-quality, high-capacity transit service along a 5-mile corridor, mainly along Columbia Pike, from the Pentagon/Pentagon City area in Arlington to the Skyline Area in the Baileys Crossroads Community Business Center in Fairfax County. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) is providing technical oversight of the Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Assessment. The corridor is one of the busiest in Northern Virginia, with approximately 16,000 daily riders (divided between Metrobus and Arlington Transit (ART)) and 31,000 motor vehicles per weekday along Columbia Pike.

The Counties, FTA, and WMATA are considering three alternatives in addition to the No-Build alternative, as follows.

- No-Build: existing and future transit and road facilities expected to be in operation by 2030 under current plans;
- Transportation System Management #1 (TSM-1), Enhanced Bus: This alternative would include, and add to, the elements contemplated under the No-Build Alternative. It would extend and change Metrobus and ART routes to improve service to the Skyline area from Columbia Pike, and involve purchases of buses; improve express bus service to the Pentagon and downtown Washington, and make conforming route and timing improvements.
- Transportation System Management #2 (TSM-2), Articulated Bus: This alternative would include the planned changes under the No-Build Alternative, the changes contemplated under TSM-1 but would also include off-vehicle fare collection, multi-door boarding, and upgraded stops and passenger amenities. Purchase of 18 articulated buses to replace standard buses on the Metrobus 16G and 16H routes would be part of this alternative.
- Streetcar Build Alternative: This would involve continued bus service along Columbia Pike, but would add a modern streetcar, running the length of Columbia Pike from Jefferson Street to Joyce Street, terminating in Pentagon City at 12<sup>th</sup> and South Eads Streets. The alternative would also involve construction of a permanent equipment storage site near the existing Navy Annex.

The planned projects under the No-Build Alternative would be included. Bus systems would remain except for Metrobuses 16G and 16H, which follow the same route as the proposed streetcar service. This alternative would require purchasing 13 modern streetcars.

The Federal Transit Administration states that the proposed project is consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with the enforceable policies of the Virginia Coastal Resources Management Program.

#### **HOW TO COMMENT:**

DEQ accepts comments from the public by e-mail, fax, or postal mail. All comments must include the name, address, and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by DEQ within the comment period. The public may review the project document at DEQ's central office in Richmond.

#### **CONTACT FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS, DOCUMENT REQUESTS, AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

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